Demilitarization drives

1537. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the current status and the details of demilitarization drive by Indian and Pakistani forces at Siachen glacier;

(b) whether any other similar demilitarization drives are being planned by Government for other inhospitable Himalayan regions sharing borders with China, Tibet and Nepal; and

(c) if so, the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Talks between India and Pakistan to discuss Siachen issue under the Composite Dialogue Framework were held in Islamabad in May, 2005. The two sides held frank and constructive discussions with a view to taking the process forward. They expressed satisfaction at the ceasefire in place since November, 2003 and agreed to its continuation. It was agreed by the two sides to continue discussions to resolve the Siachen issue in a peaceful manner.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Joint exercises by Army

1538. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that army has prepared a comprehensive plan of joint exercises with some of the leading armies of the world as a part of its strategy to use such interactions as a diplomatic tool for pursuing national security strategies;

(b) if so, the details of the major plans that the Ministry have;

(c) whether any low level exercises are also proposed with some countries; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that some of the constituents of the UPA are opposing this move?